

THE DIRECTOR.

No. 5. SATURDAY, FEB. 21, 1807.

Τὴν παιδείαν τοῖς μὲν νέοις σωρροσύνην, τοῖς δέ πρεσβυτέροις
επαρμοθίων, τοῖς δέ πένησι πλεόν, τοῖς δέ πλεσίοις κόσμου εἶναι.

Studious exercise imparts to youth, temperance, to the aged gratification, wealth to the indigent, and honour to the wealthy.

DIogenis dictum cum Diogene Laertio.

I DID not retire from the fertile subject of Greece, and those who adorn the Grecian annals by the wonderful efforts of their genius, because the theme was exhausted, but because my proposed limits allowed only of cursory remark; and it is necessary to pass into other scenes and other regions.

WHEN I reflect on the splendid cata-

logue of illustrious names deservedly celebrated in Greece, and observe how very few of them occur in the preceding essay, I can hardly expect the reader to give me credit for more than desultory observation; the highest claim of which is transitory amusement. He will be inclined, from the stores of his memory, or from the ardour of his attachment to particular studies, to reproach me for omitting characters and incidents which merit perpetual celebrity. Did not King Attalus, says one, give Aristides of Thebes a hundred talents for a single picture? Did not Candaules, another may exclaim, cover a picture of Bularchus, of no inconsiderable dimensions, with pieces of gold, in testimony of its merit? Did not, again observes a third, Demetrius Expugnator forbear to burn Rhodes, lest a picture painted by Protogenes might be destroyed? I am aware of these and of numerous other examples, nevertheless having apologised for my conciseness, I pass to other countries.

LET us make a short excursion to Egypt, and examine what was the proportion between merit and its recompense in that celebrated region.

AND first of the Pyramids. Can it be necessary to observe what mature experience, what perfect knowledge, and what is the indispensable conclusion, what encouragement of art and genius is implied in the undertaking and execution of these stupendous fabrics. It cost no less a sum than one thousand and six talents to provide the artificers who constructed the great pyramid with the radishes, onions and garlic they consumed in the progress of the work : what then must have been the whole amount of what was expended in the remuneration of the architects, and in collecting the materials of stone, iron and tools.

THE Art also of embalming, which is of the highest antiquity, and which took its rise in Egypt, formed of itself a distinct profession ; implies no contemptible

progress in scientific acquirements, and, according to ancient writers, was sanctioned and encouraged by the wealthy with the most splendid rewards. We may also form some reasonable conjectures with respect to the encouragement given to genius and art from the following examples.

HISTORY can trace with precision very little of the monuments of art or genius before the time of Sesostris. Of him Diodorus Siculus relates that wherever he extended his victorious arms he erected columns upon which his name and nation were inscribed. Herodotus saw some of these pillars, and describes two of them. Each column represented a man holding in his right hand a javelin, in his left a bow; the rest of his armour was partly Egyptian and partly Ethiopian. Each figure had this inscription, written in the sacred characters of Egypt.

“ I, Sesostris, conquered this country by the force of my arms.”

RUDE as the execution may have been of these trophies of victory, it may not unreasonably be concluded, that art and artists had been progressively encouraged and rewarded.

SESOSTRIS also placed before the Temple of Vulcan a statue of himself and another of his queen. They were thirty cubits high; and who shall presume to assert, that it is not a fragment of one of these statues, obtained by the victorious arms of our countrymen in Egypt, which now forms a valuable addition to the curiosities of the British Museum?

PHARON, another sovereign of Egypt, presented to the Temple of the Sun, two obelisks: each was formed of one solid stone, was one hundred cubits high, and eighty in diameter.

ASYCHIS, king of Egypt, erected a most magnificent vestibule, as an entrance by the east to the Temple of Vulcan. This was adorned with fine sculptures and paintings.

I proceed, however, no further in this track. Enough has probably been said to prove, that, from the remotest periods of history, genius has boldly asserted its prerogative, has preserved its ascendancy in the minds of men, has vindicated its claims, and, as it has provoked admiration, or induced delight, has proudly challenged encouragement, and obtained reward.

PROCEED we now to the Roman empire, the seat of the masters of the world. But here the mind is perplexed with a strange and inexplicable paradox. It would be vain and impertinent to descant on the great powers of genius manifested in the Roman annals from the foundation of the city to its decline and final overthrow; it would be alike absurd and useless to vindicate that country which produced a Cæsar and a Virgil, a Cicero and a Tacitus. Yet is it not strange to tell, that Rome affords no example of a rival of Apelles, or competitor with Praxiteles. The proud and lofty palaces of Rome were

indeed crowded with the noblest and the most costly monuments of art ; but they were obtained by conquest or by purchase. It was not however, till Mummius returned from the conquest of Achaia, that Rome could boast of any of the productions of the great masters ; and it is a most curious fact that the picture purchased by Attalus, which I have mentioned above, was the first which was exhibited to the curiosity of Roman citizens. This same Mummius it appears was a barbarian with respect to the arts. He loaded his caravans with the plunder of the country which his arms had subdued ; and statues and pictures formed a part of the booty. But when he got them to Rome, he had no other idea but that of converting them into substantial money. He sold them at a public auction. By some accident he had heard that Attalus had given for this same picture the enormous price of one hundred talents. He presumed from this that the tablet possessed some magical and inexplicable virtue : the words of Pliny are, *Suspicatus aliquid in ea virtutis*

quod ipse nesciret; he took it from the mass, and placed it in the Temple of Ceres. This was the first picture by a foreign artist publicly exhibited at Rome.
Quam primam arbitror picturam externam
Romæ publicatam.

EVEN after the period above mentioned, when the saloons of Lucullus, and the villas of Mæcenas, in all probability were emblazoned and adorned with the most perfect productions of the greatest artists, in every line and branch of science, we are not to look among Roman citizens for the exercise of talent and of genius. This alone is to be found among the portions of their slaves. Of course I am here speaking of statuaries and painters: the encouragements given to the muses of poetry and history are sufficiently exemplified by the honours paid to the illustrious names which swell the Augustan annals. The story of Virgil, and his recitation of these memorable lines, Tu, Marcellus, eris, &c. to the sister of Augustus, is too trite to be repeated.

BUT it is time to draw in the reins, and bring the subject nearer home. The field of the middle ages, after a long and barren interval of gloom and sterility, is almost as spacious, and quite as delightful, as those which we have traversed. The names of Michael Angelo, of Raphael, of Titian, of Guido, of Petrarch, of Boccace, of Ariosto, of Tasso, and a bright multitude throng upon the recollection, and confirm the position which it was the object of the essay to establish, that genius powerfully controuls and influences the minds of men, asserts its dignity, and vindicates reward.

IT has been the severe, perhaps the just, remark of many friends of genius, and lovers of the arts, that the annals of this country do not too much abound with examples of splendid patronage and generous encouragement. It must indeed be allowed, that it is in the power of the curious and diligent inquirer to point out some melancholy instances where the gloom of obscurity and the stings of want have shaded that lustre and restrained

those powers which, under more auspicious rays might have gilded, adorned, and informed mankind.

IT is however the peculiar pride and the no less honourable distinction of the reign of George III, that some aid, at least, some fostering encouragement, is willingly communicated, wherever merit is satisfactorily demonstrated in any branch of any of the arts.

THESE at least are not the times, nor is this the country, when and where it can with justice be lamented that the great warmth of generous patronage is wholly withheld from the disciples of science and the muses.

FOR the truth of the assertion we might appeal to a long list of facts, and direct the reader's attention to a long catalogue of honourable names, but these, it may be presumed, every man's power of recollection will readily and easily supply.

FOR the present it may be sufficient to contemplate, what is the object and design of the establishment of the British Institution. A long list of noble and opulent individuals have associated themselves for the specific purpose of communicating effective aid and protection to art, in all its varieties of excellence. We see them determined to cheer and animate the young adventurer, to confirm, and smooth and enliven the path to those who with the advantage of experience are already proceeding towards wealth and fame and honour.

WITH such principles, and exertions thus directed, success can hardly be apprehended. Genius will not fail of its reward, and ingenious labour cannot be exercised in vain.

PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT
FOR THE
FINE ARTS.

As I have nothing more anxiously at heart than the success of sculpture, painting, and engraving, I conceive no apology to be due for the insertion of the following letter relating to a *proposed establishment for the fine arts*. It comes from a gentleman who has had great experience in pictures, and who will be found to speak *con amore* upon the subject he has undertaken to illustrate.

To the Director.

SIR,

THERE are few things in which, in the present state of the world, Englishmen would wish to imitate the example of France; yet there is one institution at Paris for the encouragement of the fine arts, which might be rendered so highly beneficial to the arts in this country, that

I trust you will join me in wishing to see something like it established here.

‘Fas est et ab hoste doceri.’

The establishment goes under the appellation of ‘*L'Ami des beaux arts*:’ It consists of a number of members, who raise a sum of money by annual subscription; the whole of this money is laid out in purchasing the works of living artists, and the works, so purchased, are divided, at stated periods, among the subscribers, by lot. Thus, a sum of money is annually provided and laid out among the artists, which undoubtedly acts as a stimulus to talent and industry. But as far as I know of the particulars of the institution, it is by no means so extensive or so useful as the circumstances of this country would enable us to make it, if we chose to adopt it here.

THIS subject has so long forced itself upon my attention, that I have arranged a plan, the heads of which I now send for you to publish, if you think them fit to

be recommended to the notice of your readers.

1st. That a society be established, to consist of an unlimited number of members; each member to pay an annual subscription of five or ten guineas; the whole of the money so raised, (after paying unavoidable expenses) to be laid out in purchasing the original works of living artists, *from themselves only*, or of artists lately deceased, from *their legal representatives alone*; the works so purchased to be disposed of in the manner hereafter described.

2d. That the work of any artist may be offered to the society in the following manner: The artist to fix his own price upon his work—any member may recommend it to the notice of the society, and if approved of by a majority, the society will immediately pay the price demanded; the member who proposed it engaging to conform to one condition that will presently be mentioned.

3d. That once a year, or at some stated periods, a general meeting of the society be held, and all the works that have been purchased since the last meeting be exposed to public view, and divided among the members in the following manner, viz. The member who proposed any work to be purchased, to put it up at *half* the price which was paid for it, and that he be bound to take it at that price, if no member offer more. That any member shall be at liberty to offer more, till at last it falls to the highest bidder: if the sum finally offered should be less than the artist was paid for it, the society to bear that loss; but if more is offered than was originally paid for it, the overplus, whatever it may be, to be paid to the artist.

FROM this sketch, you will perceive that the present is a plan to raise a fund that shall be expended in premiums to encourage original works in the fine arts. If it should be established to any extent, it would greatly contribute to the en-

couragement of artists of every description: merit, unknown and unfriended would be brought into notice, and meet with ample reward.

Two suppositions may be formed as to the probable consequences of this plan; 1st. It may be so imprudently conducted that it would gradually sink into nothing; or, secondly, it may be so successfully conducted as to become an establishment of the highest importance.

To exemplify this, I shall state a case hypothetically on each side the question: suppose, then, that the subscriptions of such a society amounted to £1000 annually; that the whole was laid out in the manner proposed, and, with so little judgment, that in no one instance did the works produce more than the half of what they were purchased for. The society would lose the first year £500; the remaining £500, added to the second year's subscription, would be £1500. Again, lose half, and add the remainder to the

third subscription, and this would be £1750, and so on progressively for ten years, when they would have accumulated a very considerable sum; and at this point they would continue as long as the original number of subscriptions was paid up.

BUT if we suppose a *successful* sale, and that all the money returned into the society's hands, they would distribute the first year £1000, the second £2000, and so on, adding £1000 every year; when the tenth year they would lay out £10,000, and continue to add £1000 per annum to that sum, so long as the number of subscribers was kept up.

THIS slight sketch will shew what immense advantages might accrue to the arts by the operation of a fund supported by so very trifling a subscription: The artist would be stimulated to exertion much more than by competition for any premium, because he would be morally certain of being compensated for that exer-

tion, whereas when many contend for a premium which only one can obtain, the unsuccessful candidate must sit down in disappointment and sorrow.

THIS statement, you will perceive, is but an imperfect sketch; but I trust it will shew you that an institution founded upon this plan would be attended with great advantages to the arts. If you should think it worth notice, or wish for any farther information, I shall be happy to convey any that is in my power.

I am,

Sir,

Yours, &c.

E.

BIBLIOGRAPHIANA.

TOWARDS the close of the 17th century, the libraries of Sir Charles Scarburgh and Archbishop Tillotson were sold. These sales, both occurring in the

year 1695, will afford sufficient materials for my present article of Bibliographiana.

THE catalogue of the former was published under the following title. ‘*Bibliotheca Scarburghiana*; or, a catalogue of the incomparable library of Sir Charles Scarburgh, Knt. M. D. containing (*almost*) a complete collection of Greek books, in all faculties; with a large collection of *Mathematicks* and *Physicks*, all of the best editions, and curiously bound. To be sold by Christopher Bateman, at the Bible and Crown in Middle Row, in Holborn, according to the following method*.’

* As this method is rather a curious one, and may probably answer the purpose of a model for Messrs. Leigh, King, Stewart, &c. I subjoin it. ‘This sale will begin on Friday the 8th day of February, 1694, exactly at ten in the morning. And I do promise that every book mentioned in this catalogue shall be in the room where sold, at that time.

That every book shall have a moderate price written upon the first blank leaf, so that any gentleman may take what he pleases at the price so set down.’

THEN follows Mr. Christopher Bate-
man's Address

‘ TO THE READER.

‘ THE publick is here presented with one of the most curious collections of well-conditioned books which hath as yet appeared; it may be called *a treasure of most valuable jewels*, polished and set by the utmost advantage of art; and of metals refined to the highest standard, without mixture of counterfeit or base alloy.

‘ THE worthy Sir Charles Scarburgh, late possessor hereof, as he was a person of excellent parts, and general polite learning, with great experience and judgment in books, so he spared no cost in order to accomplish his library.

‘ His chief delight being mathematical studies, he made himself master of all books rare and good in that kind. And

as he justly esteemed *Greece* the fountain of knowledge, and that tongue the universal foundation of arts and sciences, so he laid in a compleat store of Greek literature, consisting of *Historians*, *Poets*, *Philosophers*, *Orators*, with other authors, both ancient and modern, subservient to them, not omitting the *Fathers*, among whom a great part of that ancient learning and eloquence is preserved. Neither can he be imagined to have neglected what was excellent in the *Latin tongue*, nor the useful writers in *physic* which was his profession.

‘As he was of a generous mind, he took great delight to see his *Letterati* in a *gentile garb** (possibly not so common with them as might be wished), which beside the natural worth of the authors, it is hoped may be no small invitation to the *gentleman buyer*.’

* In deference to the custom of retaining the phraseology of Chaucer and Spenser, do I retain the precise phrases of the learned Christopher Bateman.

THIS was a collection, which, considering the then state of bibliography, reflects great credit on the memory of Sir C. Scarburgh. Of theological works there were 195 articles; among which the most curious was the famous Vulgate bible of Pope Sextus V. 1590. It was not sold. The Walton and Castell, elegantly bound, brought £8. 10s. The Biblia Maxima, Par. 1660, was sold for £7. An English MS. upon Vellum, written about 300 years before, translated by Wiccliffe, was not sold.

AMONG the Greek and Latin classics, the first edition of the Iliad in 1488, said to be ‘ Charactere perantiquo,’ was disposed of for 15s. The first edition of Lycophron, printed at Basil in 1540, produced one shilling more. The Aldine Thesaurus Cornucopiæ, &c. of 1496 was sold for 15s.

THE most valuable part of this library was the mathematical collection, of which there were not fewer than 500 articles.

Of English books the number did not exceed 200: the most curious were Cranmer's bible of 1541, Sir Thomas More's works, 1557, Harding's Chronicle, 1543, (neither of which produced 30 shillings,) Bale's Sir John Oldcastle, 1544, and the two following articles — W. Forster's Sponge to wipe away the Weapon Salve, 1631—The Squeesing of Parson Forster's Sponge.

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON'S

Sale of books succeeded that of Sir Charles Scarburgh in about two months. The Archbishop's books were sold 'together with the library of MR. SETH MOUNTLEY BUNCLE, Late Master of Mercer's School, London; consisting of Hebrew, Chaldaick, Syriack, Persick, and other oriental books, with French, Italian, and Spanish,' by C. Bateman.

THIS collection was not so numerous as the preceding one, but was probably equally valuable. In the oriental lan-

guages there appear to have been upwards of 200 volumes; including the works of Robertson and Ravis.

THE Archbishop was rich in old divinity: though the ‘*Critici Sacri*’ would not now bring the sum of £11—nor L’abbe’s *Sacro-Sancta Concilia*, £28.

THE most curious article in English history was *Prynne’s Records*; a work published in the years 1666-68-70, in 3 folio volumes, and of which the fire of London consumed the greater part of the copies of the *first* volume. This volume alone has of late become so scarce, as to produce the sum of £50 and upwards. At Mr. Daly’s sale, in the year 1792, a copy of the three volumes, with the frontispiece complete, was sold for £80. 5s. The Archbishop’s copy produced only £8. See Oldy’s *British Librarian*, p. 11.

THUS much for the sales of these our worthy bibliographical ancestors. The following letter from an apparently face-

tious bibliographer, shall conclude the present article.

Introducing myself to my young friend

To the Editor of the Director,

SIR,

YOUR correspondent, who signs herself Biblietta, is, I presume, a female: she seems to have a grandmother as strangely devoted to antique English books as is my own father—and I should like to introduce these characters to each other.

I was absolutely astonished the other day, on seeing one of Mr. Oakley's patent satin-wood tables, covered with a black letter *Ship of Fools*, by one Barclay, and Tom Watson's *Passionate Centurie of Love*, lying upon the first edition of *Fox's Book of Martyrs*! You will allow, Sir, that this was a strange jumble. My father has an invincible attachment to these pursuits, and has, I think, fairly embarked in the first article just enum-

rated. But whether he will sail to the 'Purple Island,' or join 'Purchas's Pilgrimes and Pilgrimage' is at present doubtful.

For my own part, Sir, I profess to be a plain, limited-intellect man: contented with the roman letter, as I see it in Shakspeare and Milton, in Rapin, Robertson, or Hume.

I am, Sir,

With respect, yours,

BIB.

On Saturday, February 7, Mr. Davy delivered his second lecture on the chemical phenomena of nature; it was principally devoted to the consideration of the laws of chemical attraction and to experimental elucidations of the phenomena they produce. Many common and

familiar instances were added to the scientific examples; and it was stated that the greater number of those changes in which the order and harmony existing in the arrangements of our globe depend, have for their prime cause the agency of the corpuscular affinity.

THE REV. MR. DIBDIN, in his *fifth* lecture on *English literature*, dwelt on the poetry of Gower, Barbour, Blind Harry, and Hoccleve: he also particularly noticed the prose works of John Trevisa; of whom it appeared that very little was known with accuracy. The French poetry of Gower was said to be greatly superior to his English compositions; and, in the opinion of Mr. G. Ellis, ‘not to suffer by a comparison with the best contemporary sonnets written by professed French poets.’ The principal work of Gower was said to be his ‘Confession of a Lover’—written at the instigation of Richard II; who, meeting with our poet rowing on the Thames, invited him into the royal barge, and after much conversa-

tion, requested him to boke some new thinge.' The poem was said not to be destitute of incidents, from which Shakespeare, and other earlier English poets, had borrowed with considerable success.

BARBOUR's poem of 'The Bruce,' was next discussed, and Mr. Pinkerton's edition of it strongly recommended. It was said to be faithfully printed from a MS. of the date of 1489, in the Advocate's library at Edinburgh, which was copied from a still earlier MS. of equal antiquity with that of Wyntown's Chronicle.

THE poetry of Blind Harry was said to be an English translation from a Latin poem composed by Robert Blare, chaplain to the famous Sir W. Wallace, describing the exploits of that hero. Mr. D. gave a few specimens of the descriptive beauties of the poem, and observed that the latest edition of it, of any repute, was that of 1758. The first edition was printed in 1601.

HOCCLIVE's poetry formed the next subject of discussion, particularly Mr. Ma-

son's edition (1796) of some select poems never before published. This edition, although severely attacked by Ritson, was said to be of value, inasmuch as it gave us information of some particulars in Hoccleve's life, which had escaped the researches of Warton and others.

THE prose works of Trevisa were then minutely examined, and various specimens given of his style. His translation of Higden's Polychronicon was said to be first printed by Caxton in 1482; the question of his having *translated the Bible* was particularly discussed. From the private information of a friend, Mr. D. observed, that there was recently preserved in the Vatican at Rome, a work translated by Trevisa, given by some of Lord Berkeley's ancestors to Charles I, when Prince of Wales, and resident at the papal court. It was supposed to be a *translation of the Bible into English.*

THE 6th and *last* lecture of Mr. D's second course on English literature, was devoted exclusively to the works, lives, and characters of Wicliffe and Wm. of Wyke.

ham. The beneficial effects of the writings of the former, and of the academical institutions of the latter, were particularly illustrated and commended. These 6 lectures concluded Mr. Dibdin's inquiry into '*the state of English literature during the fourteenth century*'.
*to inform
and teach naivety to which was an
object among the higher classes
not ignorant still style aid to moving among
of fine art now no longer peculiar to the world to
all : 281, as noticed in the Review last
year.*

British Gallery.

THIS admirable institution for the exhibition of paintings by British Artists, opened on Monday last; and the regular influx of visitors proves the decided effect it has produced on the minds of our countrymen*.

IT is proposed in the ensuing numbers of The Director, to devote a part for the examination of these productions of British skill and ingenuity. The following

* The present exhibition is rendered particularly interesting by some models of national monuments to the memories of Nelson, Pitt, and Cornwallis.

is only a specimen of the '*manière d'exercer l'art critique*'.

No. 3. Phaeton hurled from the chariot
(of the sun.) by J. Ward.

THIS is a spirited composition: the horses are drawn in those difficult attitudes, which none but a thorough master of animal painting can successfully execute. Perhaps Mr. Ward keeps his eye too much upon Rubens—the picture is very gorgeous—and the prostrate position of Phaeton resembles too much that of the vanquished prince of darkness before the Messiah, as described in the 6th book of Paradise Lost. As the innocent, though rash, son of Apollo, Phaeton should preserve dignity even in his fall.

No. 10. Death of Lord Nelson.
S. Drummond.

THIS picture is without doubt superior to the larger one painted by the same artist on the same interesting subject. The colouring is good, especially in the foreground—probably the retired part of the

composition is rather too vividly executed. The countenance of our great naval hero is full of expression.

No. 23. *The Nun* (from Bowles's sonnets.)

J. Pocock.

A pleasing well coloured picture. Every thing is in a soft mellow tone, conformably to the tranquillity of the nun's character.

No. 14. *The Cottage Girl.* Opie.

No. 24. *Belisarius.* Ditto.

Painted in the strong characteristic manner of this eminent artist.

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